

Regarding Broadband via Cable TV infrastructure:

The Internet is not an object subject to regulation - it is merely a concept, a group of networks the operators of which have agreed to common standards and to link together in order to communicate.

In general, current right-of-way agreements for cable TV infrastructure do not grant use for data communications. Cable TV providers obviously wish to receive these additional rights, from which they hope to derive significant profit, without compensating the owners of the right-of-way.

Currently, it is common for providers of Internet links via cable TV infrastructure to limit the types of communications which can be carried out by users. These limitations may take the form of blocking certain services such as not allowing users to place email or web servers on their networks; or by blocking Virtual Private Network connections to other networks. Allowing the industry to place such limits on Internet communications is not in the public interest as it limits the utility of such services, and is antithetical to the intents and purposes of the Internet, which was designed to provide for open and universal communications.

Merely providing basic Internet connectivity is insufficient to justify providing additional right-of-way usage to the industry at no cost. It is neither appropriate, nor in the public interest, to freely grant additional right-of-way privileges to the industry unless the service provided changes to become one of a "common carrier" nature. That is, not subject to the types of service provider usage restrictions mentioned above, as are currently common in the industry. Lacking support for such open communications, the industry MUST be forced to negotiate right-of-way contracts for the limited service it intends to offer.

It is in the public interest, and for the benefit of Internet utility and growth, that the broadband Internet connectivity industry be required to provide unfettered access as a condition of receiving additional right-of-way.